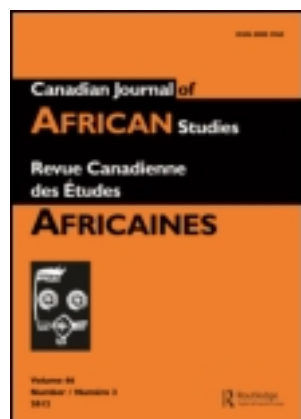


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### Les Kimbanguistes en France: Expression messianique d'une Église afro chrétienne en contexte migratoire

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scheme of the pharmaceutical industry, designed to substitute medication for medical care and show that Africans are incapable of successfully controlling their own health resources. What Foley shows instead is the “defiant resilience of survival” (164).

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**Les Kimbanguistes en France: Expression messianique d’une Église afro chrétienne en contexte migratoire**, by Mokoko Gampiot Aurelien, Paris, (Collection: Théologie et vie politique de la terre) L’Harmattan, 2010, 361 pp., ISBN 978-2-296-110405-0

Kimbanguism, a Christian movement that originated during colonial times in the Belgian Congo (currently the Democratic Republic of Congo), might well be the largest African Independent Church in the world. The official name of the movement is the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth through his Special Envoy Simon Kimbangu. Global membership ranges between 3 and 5 million believers. Strikingly only a select group of scholars are working on this fascinating branch of Christianity, whose leader, Simon Kimbangu, has become an icon in the study of colonial resistance. The Congolese, whether they identify themselves as Kimbanguists or not, all herald Simon Kimbangu as the “father of independence”.

This book, Mokoko Gampiot Aurelien’s second monograph on Kimbanguism, is a welcome addition to the slowly growing library of Kimbanguism studies. While in *Kimbanguisme et identité noire* (2004, Harmattan, Paris), ethnicity and the political, panafricanist agenda of the movement are addressed, this volume brings a fascinating sociological account of the growing Kimbanguist community in France. When in the 1970s the first Kimbanguists arrived in Europe, often as students, they had to attend Catholic and Protestant services. Forty years later, at least 14 parishes cater for an ever-growing Kimbanguist group in the Parisian area only.

The main argument of the book is that there is a dialectical relationship between the Kimbanguist Church, as it has been operating in DR Congo, and the Kimbanguist diasporic communities in Europe. The interaction plays on two levels. First, the diasporic community was an active player in the internal and external crises the Kimbanguist Church has experienced: a conflict with the World Council of Churches and the internal dispute about leadership, which ultimately split the Kimbanguist Church into two factions in 2002. Second, the Kimbanguist leaders in DR Congo mobilize the diasporic communities during their visits to Europe and via mass-mediated messages for the materialization of Simon Kimbangu’s agenda; that is to install a truly global Pan-African Christian Black Church. This transnational dimension, and in particular the exchanges between the diaspora and the community in DR Congo, is fundamental in an understanding of the growth of this movement.

The scope of the book is tremendous. In 11 chapters, Aurelien surveys the legal situation of the Kimbanguists (those without documents included) and gives us an overview of the various waves of Kimbanguist migration to France since the early 1970s, while devoting particular attention to the establishment of the Kimbanguist parishes in

France and their positioning within the various conflicts that the Kimbanguist Church has witnessed. Various ways of integrating within French society, among others entering into mixed marriages, are studied in detail. The four final chapters describe the second and third generations of Congolese Kimbanguists, in particular their relation to the homeland and their performance of being Kimbanguist. The author shows how the Kimbanguists juggle multiple identities: on the one hand, they are believers of a faith community with elaborate ritual practices, but on the other, many of them also work in the French economy and are confronted with the obligations and demands of being resident in a secular society. The two final chapters offer insight into the major faith practices of the Church (healing, baptism, marriage, funerals and celebrations of major Kimbanguist dates) and individuals' perceptions of the messianic beliefs. This is complemented by an analysis of Kimbanguists' approaches to the return question, an issue which does not have a simple answer but which depends mainly on non-religious factors such as the main reason for migration (missionizing, studying, work), attachment to relatives in the diaspora, and fear of the violence in the home country.

Throughout the book, the author shows the discrepancies between "official Kimbanguism" and "popular Kimbanguism". This distinction, initially introduced by the Swiss scholar Marie Louise Martin (1981), offers an interesting vantage point to show how Kimbanguists in France constantly recompose their own religious lives in dialogue with the migratory and transnational context.

The analysis is based on a wide range of primary data such as interviews, observations, legal documents, official documents of the Kimbanguist Church, and small media and web content. Of utmost interest is the focus on the so-called "inspired songs", a body of songs that Simon Kimbangu and successive leaders have composed, and which are now used for exegesis and within religious meetings. According to Aurelien, these songs provide a privileged entry into the Kimbanguist identity: "through songs, the Kimbanguist believes in Simon Kimbangu and his three sons; ... Through the inspired songs, God, Jesus Christ or the Holy Ghost and also the founding leaders of the Kimbanguist Church intervene in the lives of people" (120, my translation). He argues that these songs, which are transmitted orally, are even more important than the official lore of the Kimbanguist Church. Throughout the text, these songs (always with the Lingala lyrics and their translations in French) are used to show how Kimbanguism is lived and interpreted by the migrants.

The author himself is a member of the Kimbanguist community. His position as a native scholar has allowed him to provide a deep analysis of the French Kimbanguist society. Because of its unique focus on France, the author can give us a very succinct insight into the historical dynamics that have shaped the contemporary Kimbanguist Church and its concomitant community in French. Yet, this study of one European country has prevented Aurelien from unravelling the relationships with the equally important other European Kimbanguist communities such as those of London and Lisbon. Another limitation of this book is the lack of attention to the particular positioning of the Kimbanguist Congolese community in France among the wider Congolese migrant community in that country. It would have been interesting to read about the Kimbanguists' interactions with, say, the Pentecostal-charismatic groups. And, are Kimbanguists in France subjected to the same mockery as they are in Kinshasa when celebrating the major anniversaries of the Kimbanguist calendar?

Despite these minor shortcomings, this book is an important source for anyone interested in contemporary religious subjectivities and dynamics within global religious movements. The monograph will find a readership among scholars of the African diaspora, African religion and multicultural society. Finally, I would urge the author to translate this

monograph into English. The ethnographic and historical details in this book should be made available to Anglophone scholars.

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**Somali piracy and terrorism in the Horn of Africa**, by Christopher L. Daniels, Lanham, MD, Scarecrow Press, 2012, xv + 235 pp., US\$28.95 (hardback), ISBN 978-0-8108-8310-9

*Somali Piracy and Terrorism in the Horn of Africa* analyses two recently resurgent phenomena borne of Somalia's condition (and circumstance) of a failed state – piracy off the coast and terrorism on land – albeit discussing more about the former than the latter. Current scholarship on Somali piracy is mostly concerned with economic and political issues, thus testing a new route yields Daniels's discussion a new flavour. A part of the Scarecrow Press series titled "Global Flashpoints", this work – consisting of six chapters plus six extensive appendices – is designed for readers unacquainted with those pressing issues affecting global security. However, in exploring the rise of Somali piracy and terrorism, Daniels relies heavily on the recent news briefings that situate both in the culmination of state failure.

Daniels's main argument is that piracy and terrorism share one important characteristic: both are descended from state failure. The absence of a functional state has permitted piracy "to bring ships to port without the worry of being apprehended" (83). Ships from roughly sixty foreign nations have suffered either successful or attempted hijackings. While the international community has successfully stymied piracy, it has not managed to do so for terrorism, where the number of attacks have surged. Somali piracy has compelled nations that do not have a good relationship, such as the United States (US) and Iran, to coalesce in an effort to fight against it, resulting in United Nations (UN) resolutions 1814, 1816, 1836 and 1846, which call upon all member states to contribute to forces for tackling Somali piracy and even carry out land-based operations. Yet each country has taken its own approach to negotiating with pirates, with India and Russia pursuing aggressive methods for combating piracy.

Chapter 1 traces factors (and facts) that led Somalia to the protracted position of failed state. Daniels's concern is an American one: that failed states constitute a greater threat to US national security. Simply put, former US defence secretary Robert Gates labelled such failed states as Somalia as "the number one threat to US national security" (117). Drawing from narratives that favour strong states as essential components for the elimination of piracy, Daniels touches upon the emergence of clan-exclusive (sub-)states such as Puntland and Jubaland. However, these autonomous secessions (and other clan-based mini state fiefdoms) impede the functionality of the central state. The chapter also carries such inter-related themes as the notion of Greater Somalia, the military regime, the Somali–Ethiopian war and the consequence of the clan/civil wars that resulted in Somaliland reinstating its sovereignty from Somalia.